

‘Reforms’ can’t get rid of police brutality, it’s key to capitalist rule

BY JANICE LYNN

ATLANTA — Since the Jan. 7 beating of Tyre Nichols by Memphis cops that led to his death three days later, workers have been discussing the root cause of police violence and the road to prevent further cop brutality and killings. As part of this, Atlanta members of the Socialist Workers Party spoke with workers door to door in Riverdale, El-lenwood and here Feb. 4-5.

Janice Lynn and Marklyn Wilson talked with Latoya Walker in Riverdale Feb. 4. She is African American and works as an esthetician. “I think the police need better training,” Walker said.

“The Socialist Workers Party explains that the police exist to protect the system of capitalism that we live under and to protect the owners of the big corporations who exploit the mass of workers,” Lynn said. “The job of the police and the job of the courts, prisons and the whole so-called justice system is to intimidate the working class. They try to

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Fight against Jew-hatred! SWP speaks out in New Jersey

BY JOANNE KUNIANSKY

BLOOMFIELD, N.J. — More than 1,000 people took part in an interfaith rally at Temple Ner Tamid Feb. 2 in response to the attempted firebombing of the synagogue in the early morning of Jan. 29. No one was hurt.

Just before children were due to arrive for class, a worker at the temple found broken glass and spilled gasoline at the door. A surveillance video showed a masked man pulling up in a car and hurling a Molotov cocktail at the building hours earlier.

This attack is not an isolated incident. Documented reports of harassment, vandalism and violent assaults targeting Jews reached a record high across the country in 2021, reports the Anti-Defamation League.

Nicholas Malindretos from Clifton was arrested and charged with the firebombing Feb. 1. Numerous speakers used the rally to shower praise on local cops and the FBI.

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Defend Ukraine independence! Defeat Moscow’s invasion!

‘Flower protests’ against Putin’s war spread in Russia



International Memorial

“Flower protest” memorials protesting Moscow’s war in Ukraine are spreading across Russia. Above, placard in Perm reads, “Peace to Ukraine, freedom for Russia,” “No to war,” “This is happening, do not close your eyes.” It ends saying, “The people are the power.”

BY ROY LANDERSEN

Russian President Vladimir Putin is amassing forces in preparation for a deadly spring offensive in the Donbas region of eastern Ukraine. The Ukrainian military, backed by volunteers, is preparing to repulse Moscow’s attacks and launch a counter-offensive.

Putin claims his war in Ukraine aims at defeating “Nazism,” like Stalin’s was against fascist Germany in World War II.

His accusation stands reality on its head. The government in Ukraine is similar to other liberal capitalist regimes around the world. In Germany the fascists were funded and promoted by the capitalist class to crush a rising working-class movement, smash the unions and murder millions of Jews. By trying to conquer Ukraine today,

Putin is seeking to destroy its independence and regenerate the prison house of nations that existed under the czarist empire, not fight “fascism.”

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Ohio derailment disaster shows rail workers’ struggle for safety is crucial



AP/Gene J. Puskar

Derailement of Norfolk Southern freight train in East Palestine, Ohio, Feb. 3 caused dayslong fire, leak of toxic chemicals, evacuation. Profit drive of rail bosses is root of such disasters.

BY MARY MARTIN

MINNEAPOLIS — Two events took place Feb. 3 that highlight the importance and potential of rail workers’ continuing fight for safety and a decent living, including schedules that allow for a life off the job for family, union building and more.

First, a 150-car Norfolk Southern train almost 2 miles long and weighing 18,000 tons derailed in East Palestine, Ohio, dumping 50 cars on the ground. Five were tank cars con-

taining dangerous vinyl chloride, which vaporizes into phosgene when burned, the same gas that killed over 75,000 soldiers in the first imperialist World War.

Second was a protest by some 50 rail workers — members of the Brotherhood of Maintenance of Way Employees — in front of Canadian Pacific’s U.S. headquarters here. They aren’t covered by the Class 1 railroad contract imposed on workers by the

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Iran gov’t pardons 1,000s of prisoners in wake of protests, divisions in regime

BY SETH GALINSKY

Following months of protests, Iran’s Supreme Leader Ayatollah Ali Khamenei announced Feb. 5 that he is pardoning “tens of thousands” of prisoners. This includes many who were arrested for joining “Women, life, freedom” demonstrations after the Sept. 16 death of Zhina Amini at the hands of the hated “morality police.”

Twenty thousand people have been arrested as working people, students, shopkeepers and others across the country joined daily protests. Hundreds have been killed by the regime’s

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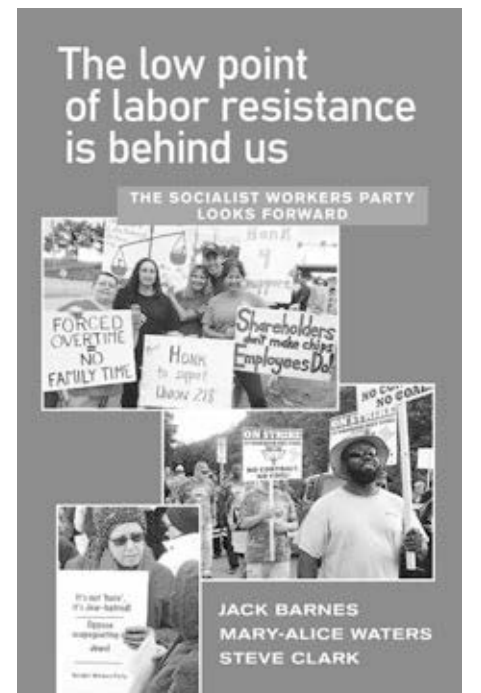
Bosses say ‘We’re back in charge,’ threaten more attacks on labor

BY VIVIAN SAHNER

“America’s bosses are starting to feel bossy again,” an article in the Feb. 2 *Wall Street Journal* noted. The authors point to the recent slowdown in the economy and a wave of layoffs that began in tech companies and has now spread to other industries. This

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Thousands across Australia march for Aboriginal rights

BY MIKE TUCKER

SYDNEY — Tens of thousands demonstrated across Australia in support of Aboriginal rights and against racism Jan. 26. The rallies are held each year as a counter-observance to “Australia Day” — a national holiday of events organized by the country’s rulers to celebrate the founding of the first British settlement at Sydney in 1788. From here, British colonial rule took over the continent by forcibly displacing the indigenous peoples, out of which emerged today’s capitalist nation-state.

This year’s protests were marked by debate over moves by the federal government to hold a referendum later this year to establish a constitutional body known as “the Voice.” It is intended to “advise” the government and Parliament, purportedly on behalf of Australia’s indigenous peoples.

The protests also coincided with the government’s announcement of restrictions on the sale of alcohol in Alice Springs, a city in the Northern Territory, where authorities blame Aboriginal youth for an alleged “crime wave.”

Up to 10,000 people attended the Jan. 26 protest rally and march here. Speakers noted the continuing dispossession and pollution of Aboriginal lands; high imprisonment rates, including of children as young as 10 years old; Black deaths in custody; removal of Aboriginal children from their parents; high unemployment and poverty rates; low life expectancy; and other examples of the racial oppression of Aboriginal people.

“For 235 years there has been a pattern of violence against Aborigi-

nal people,” Leetona Dungay told the rally. Her son, David Dungay Jr., was killed by guards at Sydney’s Long Bay jail in 2015. “Over the last 30 years nearly 700 indigenous people have died in custody and no one has ever been held accountable.”

“We will not celebrate land theft, murder and rape on Jan. 26,” said Paul Silva, David Dungay’s nephew. The anniversary is called Invasion Day by many Aborigines, whose forebears spread across Australia more than 60,000 years ago.

Supporters of the Communist League campaign in upcoming elections for the New South Wales Parliament joined the protest and also campaigned at the Yabun Festival, a major Aboriginal cultural event held nearby.

Speaking at a Militant Labor Forum two days later, Robert Aiken, Communist League candidate for Blacktown, in western Sydney, said claims of an Aboriginal youth “crime wave” were being hyped in other parts of Australia, not only Alice Springs.

“There is a real social crisis for Aboriginal communities,” he said, “but this crisis is a product of capitalism. Unemployment is reportedly 90% in some Town Camps, the impoverished Aboriginal communities on the outskirts of Alice Springs.”

The current Labor government’s response is a continuation over decades of successive government policies by both the conservative Liberal Party and Labor, he said. “They think they can arrest their way out of these problems. But the underlying social problems — lack of jobs, housing, public



Militant/Mike Tucker

Up to 10,000 people marched and rallied in Sydney Jan. 26 in support of Aboriginal rights, demanding an end to Aboriginals’ high unemployment rates, deaths in police custody.

transport, health care, and many other issues — continue today despite decades of government programs.

“It is also necessary to confront the legacy of racism in Alice Springs and other towns where legal racial segregation existed into the 1960s,” he noted.

“What Aboriginal communities face is an extreme reflection of what confronts all working people,” Aiken said. “We need a union-led fight for jobs, with wage rates, work hours and conditions that enable our families to live and to engage in union and political activity, as well as for health care, housing and other social needs.”

The answer to this social crisis, he said, isn’t more welfare programs

that sap workers’ self-confidence and make them dependent on the capitalist government. It’s breaking from the parties of the bosses and building our own party, a party of labor based on our unions, and fighting to take political power into our own hands.

Linda Harris, Communist League candidate for Liverpool in southwest Sydney, told the forum there had been an increase in union actions over the past year. She noted that growing military, trade and political conflicts around the world are a product of the imperialist world order coming apart. “Our campaign is fighting to build a working-class movement that offers a road forward,” she said. “We say, join us!”

Earthquake hits Turkey, Syria, sets off social calamity

A devastating 7.8 magnitude earthquake struck southern Turkey and northern Syria Feb. 6, triggering a social catastrophe. More than 11,000 people have been killed. Rescue efforts, with international help, are continuing.

Southern Turkey is home to many of the country’s Kurds, long oppressed by the Turkish rulers. In Syria hard-hit locations include areas under the control of rebel groups challenging the Bashar al-Assad dictatorship, as well as camps housing millions of refugees displaced as a result of the country’s civil war.

The scale of the deaths and destruction was severely amplified by the refusal of capitalist governments to reinforce the structure of housing and other infrastructure along major fault lines in the region. After previous earthquakes Kurds in Turkey condemned authorities for having built shoddy housing.

Next week’s issue of the *Militant* will have more coverage.

— TERRY EVANS

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THE MILITANT

Workers in China protest for unpaid back wages

Thousands of workers across China, laid off by construction and COVID test companies, are demanding unpaid wages. The government’s response has been a crackdown. The ‘Militant’ speaks out in defense of working people around the world.



Hundreds of workers in Hangzhou, China, protest layoffs and demand back pay Jan. 9.

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Expand reach of the ‘Militant,’ get out book by SWP leaders

BY BRIAN WILLIAMS

Through discussions at workers’ doorsteps in cities and the countryside, at union picket lines and social protests, members and supporters of the Socialist Workers Party and Communist Leagues in Australia, Canada and the United Kingdom are getting out the new book, *The Low Point of Labor Resistance Is Behind Us: The Socialist Workers Party Looks Forward* by SWP leaders Jack Barnes, Mary-Alice Waters and Steve Clark. Side by side with this effort they’re winning *Militant* readers to extend their subscriptions.

Party members from Seattle visited *Militant* subscribers they had met during a six-week strike by woodworkers against Weyerhaeuser last fall. They’re members of International Association of Machinists District W24 and IAM Local Lodge W130 in Raymond, Washington.

SWP member Jacob Perasso talked with Steven Stigar, the IAM lodge vice president, including on the conditions of small farmers. “The Washington state government is dictating what small forest tree farmers are able to do. This threatens their livelihood,” Stigar, told Perasso. This includes bureaucratic regulations that require them to maintain strips of water-tolerant vegetation alongside streams on their property.

“Defending the interests of small farmers should be a union question,” said Perasso. “The SWP supports anything that can help build an alliance between the labor movement and working farmers.”

During Perasso’s visit to the union hall in Raymond Feb. 1, Stigar renewed his subscription for six months. “There are some people’s voices out there that need to be heard and the *Militant* newspaper is an avenue. Regardless of your political stance or agenda it is still an avenue,” Stigar said.

Two other workers bought subscriptions. One of them purchased four books: *The Low Point of Labor Resistance Is Behind Us*, *Teamster Rebellion*, *Are They Rich Because They’re Smart?* and *America’s Revolutionary Heritage*.

Cop brutality is a class question

In Fort Worth, Texas, Alyson Kennedy, SWP candidate for mayor, and party member Hilda Cuzco met Albert Patrick campaigning door to door Feb. 5. They got into a discussion about the killing of Tyre Nichols. “Blacks are brutalized more often and it is something that has not gone down,” he said.

“Police brutality is a class question,” said Kennedy, “and it’s fights by working people that have pushed it back.” She showed Patrick pictures on the cover of

The Low Point of Labor Resistance Is Behind Us. They depict strikes by coal miners in Alabama and bakery workers at Frito-Lay in Kansas fighting for better job conditions and work schedules so they have time for their family.

Patrick got interested in the book. “I’ve worked jobs like this,” he said. “I am now a sports teacher for an after-school program. Kids are our future. I would like to read that book.” He purchased it along with a *Militant* subscription.

In Carnegie, Pennsylvania, SWP members Sergio Zambrano and Candace Wagner visited *Militant* subscriber Hassan Almasri and his family Feb. 5. He was an olive farmer in Syria before farming became impossible during the country’s civil war and military intervention by Ankara, Moscow, Tehran and Washington.

“Before the war water was free from the government. Now a private company controls it and charges high prices,” he said. “Two years ago my brothers returned to begin again. Everything is hard to get there and very expensive.”

Almasri was attracted to the article in the *Militant* on protests by the Bal-



Militant/Hilda Cuzco

Sports teacher Albert Patrick gets a *Militant* subscription and *The Low Point of Labor Resistance Is Behind Us* from Alyson Kennedy, SWP candidate for mayor of Ft. Worth, Texas, Feb. 5.

uch people in Iran and the photo showing demonstrators chanting, “No monarchy, no Supreme Leader.”

“I’ve been an Uber driver for five years,” he said. “My income was OK until about four months ago when the company lowered our rates by 40%. That’s why we are organizing to strike” on Valentine’s Day.

Seham Almasri, Hassan’s wife, purchased the Arabic edition of *The First and Second Declarations of Havana*.

In Montreal, the Communist League

is launching a campaign Feb. 11 to collect 150 signatures to get Beverly Bernardo, the party’s candidate for the Quebec by-election in Saint-Henri-Sainte-Anne, on the ballot. A *Militant* Labor Forum that evening will celebrate publication of *The Low Point of Labor Resistance Is Behind Us*.

To help expand the *Militant*’s reach and to get books on revolutionary working-class politics, contact the SWP and CL branches nearest you listed on page 8.

Iran pardons prisoners after protests, divisions in regime

Continued from front page
thugs. New arrests continue.

The issuing of pardons was timed to coincide with the anniversary of the 1979 revolution that overthrew the U.S.-backed dictatorship of the shah of Iran. Khamenei’s bourgeois-clerical regime lays false claim to be the continuity of that uprising. He said pardons would not be offered to those the regime claims “committed espionage,” had “direct contact with agents of foreign intelligence services,” committed violent acts, or were involved in drug dealing.

The daily *Etemad* (Trust), aligned with the reformist faction of the Iranian capitalist class, noted that many people are falsely accused of “acting against national security.” No one should be excluded from amnesty “for fictitious reasons,” the paper said. Khamenei presented the amnesty as a sign of the regime’s benevolence toward “misguided young people” incited by “foreign enemies” — meaning the U.S., Saudi and Israeli governments.

Tasnim News, a voice of the regime, published an interview with former Tehran City Council President Mohsen Hashemi Rafsanjani that gets at the reasons behind the amnesty. Alluding to the protests, Rafsanjani said the pardons are an opportunity to “extinguish the fire under ashes. This can

create relative peace and neutralize the anti-revolutionary provocations.” Rafsanjani is from the reformist faction and his sister is a political prisoner.

A sea change in consciousness

While the protests have tapered off, there has been a sea change in the attitude of working people and others toward Iran’s rulers. Every week there are new actions by workers demanding improved wages and conditions, farmers demanding water rights, retirees demanding increased pensions and more.

The regime can’t even stop opposition inside prison walls, despite torture and beatings. During a family visiting day in mid-January at Tehran’s Fashafouye prison, people whistled, clapped and cheered every time a prisoner was brought to the visiting room. At one point a voice could be heard across the room, “Women, life, freedom!”

Demands to free all political prisoners, abolish the death penalty, and to guarantee freedom of speech and equal rights have been at the heart of weekly protests in Baluchistan, home of the oppressed Baluch nationality and one of the most underdeveloped regions of the country.

On Feb. 3 thousands demonstrated in Sistan-Baluchistan province, including in Khash and the capital, Zahedan, and in Golestan province, home to Turkmen and many Baluch. Hundreds also marched in Sanandaj, Kurdistan province.

“Down with the oppressor whether he is the shah or the Supreme Leader,” was a prominent chant in Zahedan. The predominantly Sunni Baluch, Turkmen and Kurdish nationalities in Iran have a long history of standing up to the oppressive Shiite-based regime and to the monarchs who came before it.

Sunni clerics denounce repression

Protesters demanded the release of Maulana Abdulmajid Moradzei — a close adviser of Sunni cleric Maulana

Abdul-Hamid, a prominent critic of the regime — along with others who have denounced the repression, including Sunni cleric Maulana Gargij, who is under house arrest in Golestan, and recently imprisoned clerics and teachers in the Kurdish region.

Moradzei was arrested on charges of talking to the foreign press. When Iranian media “exclusively serve the government and do not reflect the voice of the people, we have no choice but to give interviews to the foreign media,” the Teachers Association union at the Darul Uloom School in Zahedan said.

Kayan newspaper editor-in-chief Hossein Shariatmadari, an ally of Khamenei, has criticized Abdul-Hamid for backing the protests and for calling for respecting the rights of the Baha’i religious minority — who are treated as “infidels” by the government — and for supporting recognition of both Israel and a Palestinian state.

Baluchistan-based Sunni Online came to Abdul-Hamid’s defense. It’s not a question of what you think of other people’s religious beliefs, the site said, quoting the cleric’s statement, “If a Jew, a Christian, a Baha’i or a Dervish is wronged, we will be upset.”

Shariatmadari’s criticism of the cleric’s support for “two independent states of Palestine and Israel,” Sunni Online said, is a “dying ideology.”

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Protests denounce firing, slander attack against art teacher by Hamline officials

BY EDWIN FRUIT

MINNEAPOLIS — Former Hamline University art teacher Erika López Prater sued the St. Paul college for defamation Jan. 17, after authorities slandered her as “Islamophobic” and hounded her from her job. The college’s assault was met with protest from writers association PEN America and some 400 faculty members across the country who demanded the college renew her contract.

During an Oct. 6 online class on Islamic art, López Prater showed students a copy of the 1307 painting “The Prophet Muhammad Receiving Revelation from the Angel Gabriel,” by an artist from Tabriz, Iran. It is considered a masterpiece. She also showed “Muhammad, Shown with a Veiled Face and Halo, at Mount Hira” by a Turkish artist from the 16th century, to contrast different Muslim portrayals of the prophet. In the syllabus, López Prater wrote that if any student was offended by the material they could skip the class and she would work with them to complete the course. None asked to do so.

Nonetheless, one student complained about the class to Dean Marcela Kostihova. The dean told López Prater there had been an outcry from the Muslim Student Association and college employees were threatening to quit. She urged López Prater to apologize in front of her class. Fearful of the consequences of not doing so, López Prater complied.

On Oct. 24 López Prater received an email saying the college had withdrawn its offer for her to teach in the spring. “López Prater was prepared to finish out her World Art course and leave Hamline,” wrote her attorneys. But Hamline “had other ideas.”

Its associate vice president of inclusive excellence, David Everett, then sent an email to every single Hamline student and all its employees stating that an incident at an unspecified class was “undeniably inconsiderate, disrespectful and Islamophobic.” The defamatory comments were “tied to López Prater,” say her attorneys, and “have since been published far and wide,” including, at the instigation of the college administration, in Hamline’s student newspaper, the *Oracle*.

Carleton meeting defends free speech

Many have come forward to support López Prater in her fight. The Council on American-Islamic Relations said it

has seen “no evidence” that professor Erika López Prater “engaged in Islamophobic conduct.”

Several hundred came to a Jan. 17 program at Carleton College in Northfield entitled, “What Happens When Students Are Offended by Course Materials? Teaching Islam and Islamic Art in the Age of Inclusion.”

The panel included Ahoo Najafian, assistant professor of Islamic Studies at Macalaster College; Alexander Jabbari, assistant professor of Asian and Middle Eastern Studies at the University of Minnesota; Mark Berkson, professor and chair of the Department of Religion at Hamline; and López Prater.

“As a Muslim, I am offended by what the administration did to López Prater,” said Amna Khalid, an associate history professor at Carleton, who chaired the meeting.

At the start of the meeting, a statement was read by the head of the Muslim Students Association at Carleton agreeing with Hamline’s attempts to smear López Prater.

Berkson said teachers cannot base their instruction on whether a student feels uncomfortable about a topic. “If a student does not believe in evolution, does that mean that this should not be taught?” he asked. Khalid said that across the country close to 75% of all instruction is taught by adjunct or contract teachers like López Prater, who have no right to appeal a dismissal.

Berkson had sent a letter opposing the administration’s action to the *Oracle*, but the editors took it down

after posting it at first. He said his letter was only put back up on the website after numerous complaints.

Berkson joined a panel at a Jan. 28 Militant Labor Forum here with Kevin Dwire, speaking for the Socialist Workers Party. Berkson walked through the attacks on López Prater.

Berkson had attended a Hamline meeting about the incident that was addressed by Jaylani Hussein, head of the local Council on American-Islamic Relations chapter. Hussein called for the images López Prater had shown in class to be banned and pointedly referred to the 2015 killings of the editors of *Charlie Hebdo* in France.

Berkson pointed out that when he tried to express opposition to the college’s treatment of López Prater, an administrator tried to silence him telling him, “That’s enough.”

“We have to defend democratic rights, which are under attack not only on the campuses,” Dwire said, “but on the working class.” He pointed to “rulings that the coal miners union has to pay the company for its losses during



Flyer for Jan. 17 debate at Carleton College, attended by several hundred, following firing, false accusation of “Islamophobia” against teacher Erika López Prater by St. Paul Hamline University.

an ongoing strike in Alabama and the Biden administration and Congress banning the right to strike of rail workers” as examples.

“Freedom of speech is what we need. If you ban any one group, then you are next,” Dwire said.

López-Prater has now accepted a teaching position at Macalaster College in St. Paul. Since announcing her lawsuit against Hamline, college authorities admitted that their claim she was Islamophobic was “flawed.”

Bosses say ‘We’re back in charge,’ threaten attacks on labor

Continued from front page means the bosses think they have more leverage against workers.

Rivian, an electric automaker, announced its second round of job cuts Feb. 1. In January, FedEx, toymaker Hasbro, Dow Chemical, IBM, publishing giant HarperCollins, 3M, Amazon, Google, and others announced layoffs that together amount to tens of thousands of jobs.

Bosses at Google showed how much they valued workers when they sent out emails Jan. 20 firing 12,000. Those who missed the message and showed up at offices found their entry badges didn’t work. In New York some were marched out of the building by security. Alphabet, Google’s parent company, made \$60 billion in profits in 2022.

“As layoffs occur, some employees might be more accommodating to the needs of companies,” Christian Ulbrich, a real estate executive, told the *Journal*. That remains to be seen. The question has never been what the bosses would do. They’ve never stopped driving to maximize profits at workers’ expense, which has led to a number of strikes over the last couple of years.

A recent column in the *New York Times* explained how some bosses routinely avoid overtime payments by classifying workers who earn more than \$35,568 a year as salaried managers. “Food cart managers,” “carpet shampoo managers,” and “price scanning coordinators” then lose the right to overtime pay.

There is an increasing number of working people who have decided

“enough is enough” to more speedup, work hours that destroy family life, wages that don’t keep up with price hikes and life-or-death attacks on job safety.

Labor struggles aren’t letting up. Teamsters Local 916 members at Archer Daniels Midland, one of the top 10 largest food companies in the world, went on strike Feb. 3 at the Decatur, Illinois, facility after the company refused to match wages and benefits paid at other locations.

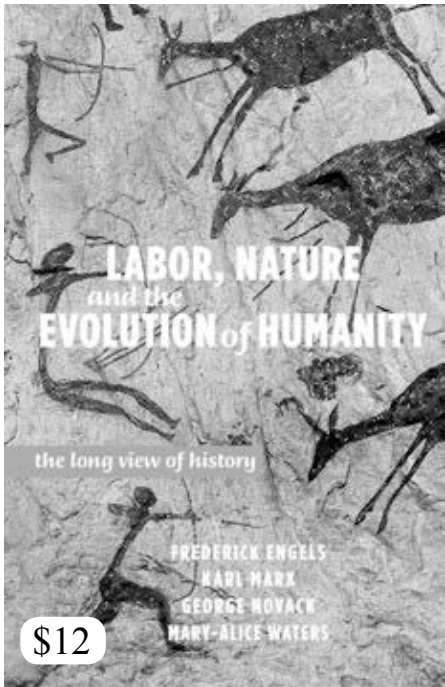
On Feb. 4 the Teamsters union announced that members working at Aramark Uniform Services, one of the largest uniform service providers in the Midwest, halted strike preparations after negotiations led to a better contract. It “provides larger wage increases than we’ve seen in the past and freezes insurance rates,” said Local 238 Business Agent Dave Miller. The agreement was ratified by union members across Iowa and in Sioux Falls, South Dakota.

At the same time, the *Journal* noted 11 million jobs in the U.S. remained unfilled in December. And in January more than a half million workers got new jobs, reversing a five-month run of slower hiring. Still, the labor force participation rate — the number of workers in a job or currently looking for one — remains below what it was in 2020. Some 5.3 million workers want a job but have given up looking for one.

Most important is the increased confidence and combativity workers continue to show. More workers are using our economic power and class

solidarity to confront bosses’ intensified attacks. Growing numbers recognize today’s union fights are in the interest of all workers and have stepped up to offer support. Solidarity is crucial for strikes by sanitation workers in Camden, New Jersey, miners in Brookwood, Alabama, and union struggles elsewhere.

Bipartisan backing for the government’s ban on a rail strike in the fall is just the latest example of why neither the Democratic nor Republican parties can represent working people. A broad discussion is needed on forging a party that *can* speak and act for the working class and all the oppressed, a labor party based on our unions.



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Black Liberation and the Road to Workers Power. Speaker: Michael Najim, Socialist Workers Party. Sat., Feb. 18, 7:30 p.m. Donation: \$5. 2401 1/2 Central Ave. NE, Unit B. Tel: (612) 271-1930.

—ON THE PICKET LINE—

Thousands take to streets in biggest strike in UK for 10 years

LONDON — Up to 500,000 workers from different unions went on strike Feb. 1. Some 300,000 teachers, 70,000 university lecturers, thousands of train and bus drivers and 100,000 civil servants walked out.

“It’s the biggest strike for 10 years, but it’s a first for me,” Jack O’Donnell, a primary school teacher in Coventry, told Coventry Live at a rally of hundreds in the city.

Thousands joined rallies — in London, Manchester, Nottingham, Birmingham, Newcastle and Bristol — to demand pay increases, protest deteriorating working conditions and attempts by the government to limit the right to strike.

More than 10,000 marched through the center of the city here, including members of the National Education Union, the University and College Union, the Rail, Maritime and Transport Workers union and the Associated Society of Locomotive Engineers and Firemen.

“The government’s plans to limit strikes show they fear us,” Chris Morehead, a Rail, Maritime and Transport safety rep in Manchester told participants in a rally there. “The RMT was the first to strike. They tried to isolate us, but we knew that others would strike too. We have the power to stop their attacks.”

— *Andrés Mendoza*

Nurses across the country rally for end to the staffing crisis

OAKLAND, Calif. — Nurses held a spirited rally at the University of California San Francisco Benioff Children’s Hospital here on Jan. 26, part of a national day of action called by the National Nurses United.

They are demanding the hospital industry step up its hiring to end the nationwide staffing crisis. The signs and chants were “Staff up! For safe care.”

The union says the cause of the crisis is “a decades-long campaign by hospitals to decrease inpatient beds

— particularly in pediatric units and units deemed less profitable — and to short-staff units in order to maximize profit.” The National Nurses United has some 225,000 members across the country.

The picketing nurses, members of the NNU-affiliated California Nurses Association, also focused on keeping care in Oakland. They say staffing shortages and the failure to maintain the hospital and replace outdated equipment affects their ability to care for patients adequately.

Other protests took pace in Arizona, Florida, Georgia, Kansas, Missouri, North Carolina, New York and Texas.

— *Ellen Brickley*



Militant/Pete Clifford

Over 1,000 workers protested in Manchester, England, Feb. 1, part of 500,000 nationwide who rallied for raises, better work conditions and the end of government attempts to limit strikes.

Sanitation workers strike for raise, health care cost cap

BY JANET POST

CAMDEN, N.J. — “Until you say ‘no,’ the companies are just going to keep taking back more,” striker Bob Klein told the *Militant* on an enthusiastic Feb. 4 picket line here by Teamsters Local 115. One hundred thirty sanitation workers — drivers, helpers and maintenance workers — voted unanimously Jan. 29 to strike Waste Management of New Jersey at its Camden yard. The walkout began after their contract expired Jan. 31.

Waste Management, the largest trash-collection and recycling company in the U.S., bought the yard over 20 years ago. The union has been negotiating since last October, but the company now refuses further talks.

Shop steward Ivan James told the *Militant* that the membership is asking for a 7% raise each year of the three-year contract. The company has only offered 2%. “And since they keep wanting to raise our health care costs, we want to put a cap on that right now, including what we pay for prescriptions.”

Workers picket seven days a week from early morning to evening.

James, a truck driver for 11 years, said workers have a regular 60-hour

workweek, but management sometimes insists on “off-the-clock work,” like maintaining the trucks. “We’re really asking for everybody’s support for our strike,” he said.

Klein, who has worked here as a driver for 26 years, as well as other strikers, said that while wages and health care are important issues, they are deeply concerned over the company’s demand that video cameras in the truck cabs that managers can access “go live.”

“The union doesn’t oppose cameras when used for safety or training, but not as a hammer for the company,” said Klein. “We draw the line at being seen and heard the whole time we are at work. That is an invasion of our privacy.”

Driver David Jones agreed, saying, “We are honest workers. This is wiretapping! They have no respect for us. What if I need to talk with my family privately?”

Klein said the bosses also want to add a “Rule No. 11” to their “10 Life Critical Rules” that would bar the use of cellphones in the trucks, subject to termination.

Each truck crew consists of a driver and a second worker. The yard’s 100

trucks service residential garbage in Camden, the Borough of Haddonfield, and Winslow Township, and companies like Home Depot, ShopRite, Wawa, Lowe’s, Walmart and the Cherry Hill Mall.

In 2021 the Teamsters union reported that jobs in the solid-waste industry are the fifth most dangerous ones in the country, with 70 to 90 workers dying every year on the job.

Waste Management is a nationwide company and the majority of its 45,000 workers are nonunion.

The bosses brought in some 80 nonunion workers to try to break the strike, from Los Angeles, Las Vegas, Arizona, Utah, South Carolina and Georgia. They get their home-yard pay, additional pay in Camden, \$60 a day toward food, and a hotel room. A “security car” follows behind their truck on the route, said Klein.

While the cops have been giving pickets some leeway, they can’t try to prevent scab trucks from reentering the yard.

The strikers won solidarity from area construction workers in Laborers Local 172, Teamster-organized janitorial workers from the University of Pennsylvania, truckers from other Teamster locals, as well as workers in the neighborhood.

25, 50, AND 75 YEARS AGO



February 23, 1998

ST. PAUL, Minnesota — About 300 Teamster strikers and supporters rallied Feb. 10, across from Honeywell’s plant in Golden Valley, Minnesota. This factory, which employs 1,500 members of Teamsters Local 1145, and two other area plants of the aerospace controls manufacturer have been shut since the strike began on Feb. 2.

The first speaker was John Senum, who last August was a local rank-and-file leader of the Teamsters strike at United Parcel Service. “We’re proud of your fight against the two-tier,” Senum said. One of the central issues is the company’s demand to pay new hires a substantially lower wage. “We’ll stay with you on the picket lines ’til we win.”

Gary George, a valve assembler, told the *Minneapolis Star Tribune*, “The more Honeywell downsized, the more work we had to do. I went from 800 parts to 1,200 parts (per week).”



February 23, 1973

Feb. 13 — “Devaluation of the dollar ... is at best only a temporary solution ... trade legislation must follow.” These remarks by President Nixon emphasized the escalated stage of international trade and financial warfare that surrounds the second devaluation of the dollar in 14 months.

This is a struggle where no matter which competing capitalist power temporarily gains the edge, workers always lose. The aim of the monopolists is to shift the problems of world trade and finance onto workers’ backs.

The uncontrollable need to expand markets means that what one power gains — under the prevailing conditions of saturated world markets — another power loses. This irrepressible competition is the cause of the financial crises, and the increasingly harsh measures against workers’ wages and standards of living the world over.



February 23, 1948

The Italian working class, once freed from the fascist dictatorship, has shown an admirable fighting spirit since 1943. The Italian workers are fighting today in the vanguard of the European working class.

The workers of a metallurgical plant in Milan set the example by occupying the factory in the latter part of November. Workers were following the example of the Milanese workers in one city after another. At cities where factories have been occupied, the slogan of workers control of hiring, firing and production heads the workers’ demands.

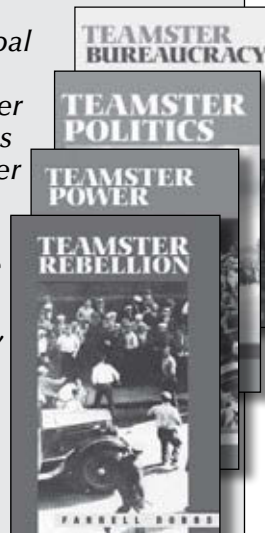
Nothing is so indicative of a ripening revolutionary situation as a powerful movement involving progressively all layers of the population. These last few weeks have successively witnessed powerful movements of soldiers and peasants, as well as beginnings of unrest among the women and the youth.

The Teamster Series

Lessons from U.S. labor battles of the 1930s

by Farrell Dobbs

“The principal lesson of the Teamster experience is not that under an adverse relationship of forces, the workers can be overcome, but that with proper leadership, they can overcome.”



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Rail workers’ fight for safety

Continued from front page
bosses and government last fall, and are demanding higher wages, paid sick days and more.

Deadly danger in Ohio derailment

The Norfolk Southern train had a crew of three workers, an engineer, conductor and conductor trainee. In search of speedup and higher profits, NS bosses have cut back on car inspections, and an axle failure on the train led to an emergency full brake application. When the train went into emergency the cars started jackknifing, dumping 50 onto the ground and a giant fire broke out. The crew was able to uncouple the three engines and drive free.

Authorities ordered everyone who lived within a mile of the derailment evacuated. When it was disclosed what the contents of the tank cars were, they decided it was too dangerous to try and put the fire out.

Ohio Gov. Mike DeWine deployed the National Guard two days later, announcing there had been drastic temperature changes in one of the tankers, raising the potential for an explosion that would shatter the rail car and shoot dangerous chemicals and shrapnel flying out in a mile-wide radius.

In a statement, Candace Wagner, the 2022 Socialist Workers Party candidate for governor of Pennsylvania, who is also a freight rail conductor and member of the Brotherhood of Locomotive Engineers and Trainmen union based in Pittsburgh, 40 miles from East Palestine, said:

“The most recent derailment in Ohio is a reflection of the dangerous working conditions facing rail workers and all those living in the communities alongside the tracks.

“The rail bosses, backed by the federal government, refused to address any safety or other substantive issues raised by rail workers through our unions in the recent national rail negotiations.

“In their lust for profits, the railroad bosses are running increasingly long, heavy trains and pushing on rail workers smaller crews, arbitrary schedules, longer shifts and more work than ever before. Massive cuts have been made in the operating crafts, car inspectors, mechanical and maintenance of way workforces. All this leads to derailments like this, which show that to protect rail workers and all those living near the tracks, our unions need to fight for workers control of production.

“We need measures like a limit of 50 cars per train; a minimum crew of four with two on the head end and two in a caboose or engine on the

rear. The state authorities declared a state of emergency in the East Palestine area. Thousands have been evacuated near the derailment. No one knows the long-term effects of this incident on the health of the workers involved, the local residents, and on the air, soil and water.

“A capitalist government functions to guarantee profits for the bosses, facilitating their power to exploit workers’ labor. This is their job, not taking steps to develop the railroads or any other industry to advance the needs of society. For workers, union power and class independence becomes a precondition not only to take control over safety but to organize freight and passenger transportation not for profit, but to meet the needs of workers and farmers.

“We need to build a labor party based on our unions to unite all those exploited and oppressed by capital to organize effective solidarity with union and social struggles and fight to take political power into our own hands.”

On Feb. 6, authorities expanded the evacuation zone — threatening anyone who entered with arrest — punctured and drained the tank cars, then set the leaked contents on fire.

A day later, residents were still barred from returning home, and area residents and evacuees close to the evacuation zone were told to stay inside.

DeWine said that at some point National Guard troops dressed in special protective gear would be sent to check if the air there was safe.

BMWE workers fight for contract

The protest organized in Minneapolis by the BMWE unionists demanded Canadian Pacific return to negotiations and address workers’ pressing issues of wages, punitive work rules, lack of paid sick



Rail workers in Brotherhood of Maintenance of Way union picket Feb. 3 at Canadian Pacific office in Minneapolis. They are demanding higher wages, paid sick days, pay for travel, housing when working away and improved safety on the job. It was same day as derailment in Ohio.

days and inadequate reimbursement for away-from-home expenses. The union says conditions today are dangerous and damage the quality of workers’ lives.

BMWE members build and maintain rail tracks around the country. These workers work for the Canadian Pacific on U.S. tracks that used to belong to the Soo Line, Milwaukee Road and the Delaware and Hudson, companies that no longer exist.

Chanting “No justice, no peace” and “Union power,” pickets got thumbs ups and honked horns from passing drivers. Union officers used a megaphone to tell protesters and passersby that after more than a year of fruitless negotiations, CP bosses had walked out. They say they want federal intervention.

“Things are boiling and if we get the opportunity to strike, we’re not taking it off the table,” said George Loveland, a BMWE vice general chair.

He said lack of any sick days is an important issue, “If you get sick, or your child is sick, and your wife also doesn’t have any sick time at work, then we have

no way to help out,” he said. “And If we miss work, we get in trouble and face discipline from the company.”

Loveland told the *Militant* another rally in Omaha in March is being planned.

A Teamsters Local 125 truck was parked by the pickets, outfitted with heaters, chairs and hot coffee so unionists could thaw out and meet one another.

Joining the picket were members of the SMART-TD conductors union at Canadian Pacific in Minnesota and BNSF in Nebraska, two BMW members from Nebraska, members of Bakery, Confectionery, Tobacco Workers and Grain Millers Local 22 here and from the Minnesota Nurses Association.

Clark Ballew, information officer for the BMW, told the *Militant* that while Canadian Pacific is cutting crews, it’s raking in record profits, enabling the company to pursue acquiring the Kansas City Southern Railroad, which would make them the only carrier stretching from Canada to Mexico.

You can’t ‘reform’ police brutality away, it’s key to maintaining capitalist rule

Continued from front page
keep us in check so we don’t organize together to replace this system with one that puts the interests of workers and farmers first.”

Lynn described how in Cuba, where workers and peasants made a revolution, the cops who had brutalized them for decades were replaced by a new revolutionary policing force made up of the workers and peasants who had fought to overturn capitalism.

“That’s the course we need to follow here,” Wilson said.

“I think you’re right,” Walker agreed. “The police and the whole system has been dismantled and we have to start all over again.” She got a subscription to the *Militant* and a copy of *Are They Rich Because They’re Smart? Class, Privilege, and Learning Under Capitalism* by SWP National Secretary Jack Barnes, to find out more about the road forward for the working class.

John Benson and Janice Lynn spoke with retired postal worker Gus Howard, who said he thought “the white majority in this country sees the killing of Blacks as a way to keep themselves in power.” He said the five Black cops charged with killing Nichols were just not taught right. “I don’t trust Black cops anymore.” Howard is African American.

Benson replied that it was a question of two classes — workers and bosses —

and that workers are of all nationalities, Asians, Latinos, Blacks and Caucasians, all facing exploitation by the bosses.

“Their system is in crisis,” Benson said. “It’s harder for workers to find a job we can live on, and as we begin to resist the rulers fear this resistance. The police are and will be used more to try to keep us in our place so the capitalist class — a small minority of the population — can stay in power.”

Lynn pointed to the massive strikes that erupted in the 1930s demanding the right to have a union, an eight-hour day and other demands. The bosses responded to this threat to their system by using the cops, company thugs and more to violently attack the workers as they fought for their rights.

“I still think the police are being used to get rid of as many of us so the whites can stay in a majority. We get killed more now,” Howard said.

“Blacks face racist discrimination and are killed disproportionately by the cops,” Benson said. “But this will only change when we eliminate the capitalist class that tries to divide us, the better to exploit us. The Socialist Workers Party says the working class needs to unite in struggle so we can take power into our own hands and end the system of capitalism that is responsible for the brutality and violence we face.”

Lisa Potash, Socialist Workers Par-

ty candidate for U.S. Senate in 2022, and Wilson talked to dental hygienist Joanna Worelds while knocking on doors in Atlanta Feb. 5.

‘A deeply systemic problem’

“Violence is part of the cultural role of the police,” Worelds, who is Caucasian, said. “The police represent a deeply systemic problem.”

“The police can’t be reformed under capitalism,” Potash said. “The Socialist Workers Party stands with working-class families fighting for some measure of justice for their loved ones killed by the police.” Worelds got a copy of the *Militant* to find out more about the party and its views.

“I thought what happened in Memphis was horrific,” Alison, a 58-year-old computer operator who asked that her last name not be used, told SWP campaigners Sam Manuel and Susan LaMont when she invited them into her living room in Ellenwood. “Completely uncalled for. Everyone should be treated as a human being. Ninety percent of what the cops do is never caught on camera.

“Now the police are getting charged with things they wouldn’t have been charged with not that long ago,” she said.

“The speed with which they charged the cops in Memphis shows the impact of the victory won over Jim Crow

Defend Ukraine independence! Defeat Moscow’s invasion!

Continued from front page

After suffering significant defeats in Ukraine, Putin has shifted to a murderous bombardment of civilian populations and key infrastructure, reminiscent of the firebombing of Dresden, Germany, and Tokyo by London and Washington in the second imperialist world war.

Civilian fighters play a key role in Ukraine’s air defenses. As air raid sirens sound, volunteer units of working people rush to the top of high-rise buildings or into fields to monitor the skies. They shoot down many of the slow-moving drones, using Soviet-era heavy machine guns that they’ve adapted.

Tens of thousands of Russian troops are gathering in eastern Ukraine for a major offensive. Conventional forces are reinforcing the Wagner Group mercenary militias that Moscow is using. They have suffered heavy losses, employing “human wave” assaults that have led to thousands of deaths. There are up to 50,000 Wagner fighters in eastern Ukraine. They are largely “recruited” from inmates across Russia’s prison system by offers of pay and an amnesty if they survive combat.

Russian objectors to Putin’s war

After seeing the horrors that Putin’s war inflicts on Ukrainians and on Russian soldiers, Andrei Medvedev, a Wagner platoon officer, deserted and escaped on foot to Norway, where he is seeking asylum. Former convicts recruited to the militia are “sent to the front line like cannon fodder,” he told the Moscow Times.

Medvedev reported seeing two prisoners shot “in front of others for refusing to follow orders.” He said, “there were a lot of such cases.”

Konstantin Yefremov, a former lieutenant in Moscow’s army, told the

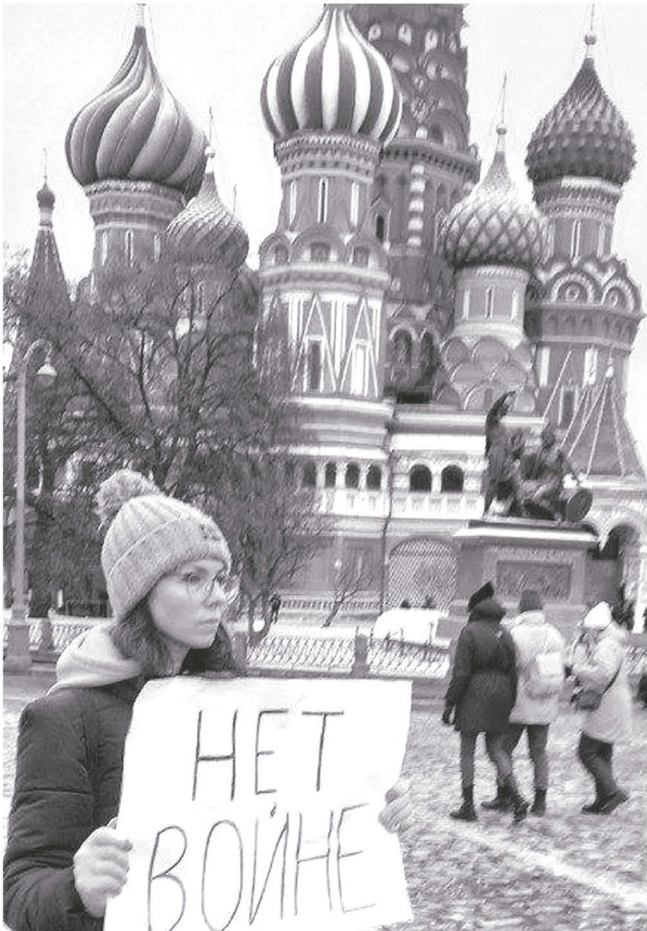
BBC he was repulsed by seeing mistreatment and torture of Ukrainian prisoners of war by senior Russian officers. He and his men tried to smuggle cigarettes and food, as well as hay to sleep on, to their captives.

When Yefremov tried to resign, he was denounced as a coward and a traitor by a top officer. Eventually he was dismissed for refusing to return to fight in Ukraine and had to flee Russia. He told reporters he wanted to apologize to “the entire Ukrainian nation for coming to their home as an uninvited guest with a weapon in my hands.”

Olesya Krivtsova, a university student from the northern Russian city of Arkhangelsk, is facing more than 10 years in a penal colony for opposing the war. She is accused of “justifying terrorism” and “discrediting the Russian armed forces.”

Krivtsova was added to a list of supposed terrorists and extremists by the Russian government. Her crime? She posted pictures of Ukrainian civilians killed by Moscow’s forces. In particular, she circulated recommendations from Kyiv aimed at Russian soldiers explaining how they could surrender.

More than a million Russians, con-



Yekaterina Kotsar holds sign, “No to war!” in Moscow’s Red Square Jan. 22. Across Russia solo protests are spreading as are memorial “flower protests” against Putin’s invasion of Ukraine.

script-aged men or their close relatives, have contacted the Ukrainian army’s “I Want to Live” project since Putin called up 300,000 new draftees in September.

Across Russia other opponents of the war are also being prosecuted.

Anti-war “flower protests” have spread as people continue to set up memorials for the dozens of Ukrainians killed in the Kremlin’s missile strike on a Dnipro housing block last month, one of the deadliest single incidents of Moscow’s invasion.

‘Flower protests’ in Russia

Displays of flowers, stuffed toys, pictures of the destroyed high-rises and handwritten notes have sprung up at multiple sites in at least 60 cities. Some are placed alongside statues of Ukrainian literary figures like Taras Shevchenko, Lesya Ukrainka and Nikolai Gogol. Others are laid at monuments to victims of Soviet-era political repression.

Anti-war graffiti and stickers are appearing on Russian streets. Solitary individuals hold placards demanding “Peace to Ukraine! Freedom for Russia!” or “No to war!”

“It’s a statement against the war, not just mourning for the dead people in Dnipro,” one woman laying flowers at a memorial in the Siberian city of Novosibirsk, told the Moscow Times. “I couldn’t stay silent.”

Interview with Pussy Riot’s Masha Alyokhina



The Observer/Murdo MacLeod
Pussy Riot’s Masha Alyokhina spent almost two years in prison for protesting against Putin regime.

BY SIGURLAUG GUNNLAUGSDOTTIR

REYKJAVIK, Iceland — For the first time, the *Militant* was able to interview Masha Alyokhina, a member of Pussy Riot, a performance art collective, whose members have been imprisoned for their opposition to Russian President Vladimir Putin’s regime and its wars.

The group had just completed an eight-month international tour raising support for the Ukrainian people’s fight to repel Moscow’s invasion. As part of its efforts, the band set up an exhibition at Reykjavik’s Kling & Bang gallery showcasing the group’s protests from 2011 to 2021. It’s titled, tongue-in-cheek, “Velvet Terrorism: Pussy Riot’s Russia.”

Tour stops concluded with images of police beating protesters and political prisoners held in Russian prison camps today. Through the tour the band is raising money to repair a children’s hospital bombed in Kyiv.

The protest band members gained worldwide attention after a performance

in a Moscow Orthodox cathedral to protest the church hierarchy’s endorsement of Putin. As a result, Alyokhina and Nadezhda Tolokonnikova were sentenced in 2012 to two years in labor camps. Following an international campaign for their release, they were paroled after 21 months.

Alyokhina then spent more time under house arrest or in special detention after joining protests demanding freedom for political prisoners and against Moscow’s 2014 seizure of Crimea. After Moscow’s invasion of Ukraine last year, she left Russia in May disguised as a food courier. She desired to “inform the whole world about what is happening in Russia” and wanted to “write anti-war songs and raise money for Ukraine.”

“When you receive a sentence they send you to a penal colony, a Gulag,”

she said. “It’s like a strange village divided into living and working zones.” Prisoners live in barracks of 80 to 100 people, all “sleeping in one room together.” They have “one small kitchen and usually three toilets and basins.” The only hot water is for the bath and only one bath is allowed each week.

The working zone is fenced off “like a strange factory where the prisoners produce police and army uniforms.” While the workday is legally limited to eight hours, “usually it is 10 to 12 hours per day, six days a week.”

When a “Human Rights Commission visited the penal colonies, I went to them and asked questions about the conditions,” Alyokhina said. Although it gets to minus 35 C (minus 31 F) where she was incarcerated, “you are not allowed to wear a cap. I just asked for the clothes — and that was enough for the administration. They prepared a small provocac-

Continued on page 9

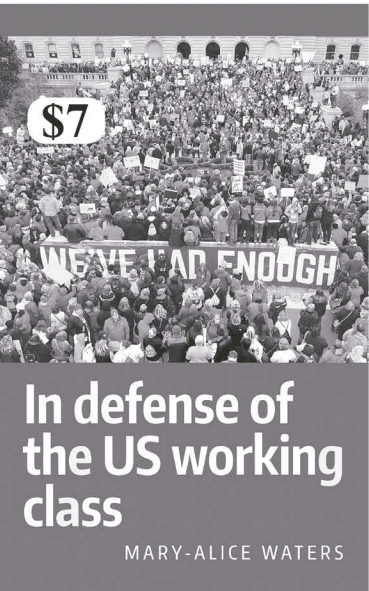
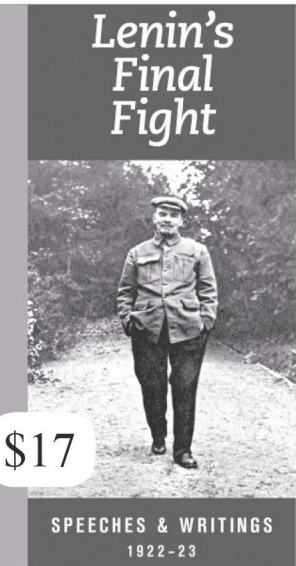
“I declare war to the death on Great Russian chauvinism.”

“It must be absolutely insisted that the union Central Executive Committee should be presided over in turn by a Russian, Ukrainian, Georgian, etc. Absolutely!”

— V.I. Lenin, 1922

In 1922 and 1923 Lenin waged his last political battle. At stake was whether the revolution would remain on the proletarian course that had brought workers and peasants to power.

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Malcolm X: ‘It is impossible for capitalism to survive’

One of Pathfinder’s Books of the Month for February is *By Any Means Necessary* by Malcolm X. An outstanding leader of the struggle for Black rights in the U.S. who also emerged as a leader of the international working class, Malcolm was assassinated Feb. 21, 1965, while speaking at the Audubon Ballroom in Harlem, New York. The excerpt is from the Jan. 18 interview with him a month earlier conducted by Young Socialist Alliance leaders Jack Barnes and Barry Sheppard. It was published in the March-April issue of the Young Socialist. Copyright © 1992 by Pathfinder Press. Reprinted by permission.

BOOKS OF THE MONTH

QUESTION: Why did you break with the Black Muslims?

MALCOLM: I didn’t break, there was a split. The split came about primarily because they put me out, and they put me out because of my uncompromising approach to problems I thought should be solved and the movement could solve.

I felt the movement was dragging its feet in many areas. It didn’t involve itself in the civil or civic or political struggles our people were confronted by. All it did was stress the importance of moral reformation — don’t drink, don’t smoke, don’t permit fornication and adultery. When I found that the hierarchy itself wasn’t practicing what it



Malcolm X, right, meets with Fidel Castro at Hotel Theresa in Harlem, New York, Sept. 19, 1960. The Cuban Revolution “overturned the system” Malcolm explained in 1963.

preached, it was clear that this part of its program was bankrupt.

So the only way it could function and be meaningful in the community was to take part in the political and economic facets of the Negro struggle. And the organization wouldn’t do that because the stand it would have to take would have been too militant, uncompromising, and activist, and the hierarchy had gotten conservative. It was motivated mainly by protecting its own self interests. I might also point out that although the Black Muslim movement professed to be a religious group, the religion they had adopted — Islam — didn’t recognize them. So, religiously it was in a vacuum. And it didn’t take part in politics, so it was not a political group. When you have an organization that’s neither political nor religious and doesn’t take part in the civil rights struggle, what can it call itself? It’s in a vacuum. So, all of these factors led to my splitting from the organization. ...

QUESTION: How do you define black nationalism, with which you have been identified?

MALCOLM: I used to define black nationalism as the idea that the black man should control the economy of his community, the politics of his community, and so forth.

But, when I was in Africa in May, in Ghana, I was speaking with the Algerian ambassador, who is extremely militant and is a revolutionary in the true sense of the word (and has his cre-

dentials as such for having carried on a successful revolution against oppression in his country). When I told him that my political, social, and economic philosophy was black nationalism, he asked me very frankly, well, where did that leave him? Because he was white. He was an African, but he was Algerian, and to all appearances, he was a white man. And he said if I define my objective as the victory of black nationalism, where does that leave him? Where does that leave revolutionaries in Morocco, Egypt, Iraq, Mauritania? So he showed me where I was alienating people who were true revolutionaries dedicated to overturning the system of exploitation that exists on this earth by any means necessary.

So, I had to do a lot of thinking and reappraising of my definition of black nationalism. Can we sum up the solution to the problems confronting our people as black nationalism? And if you notice, I haven’t been using the expression for several months. But I still would be hard pressed to give a specific definition of the overall philosophy which I think is necessary for the liberation of the black people in this country. ...

QUESTION: How much influence does revolutionary Africa have on the thinking of black people in this country?

MALCOLM: All the influence in the world. You can’t separate the militancy that’s displayed on the African continent from the militancy that’s displayed right here among American blacks. The positive image that is developing of Af-

ricans is also developing in the minds of black Americans, and, consequently they develop a more positive image of themselves. Then they take more positive steps — actions. ...

QUESTION: How do you view the role of the U.S. in the Congo?

MALCOLM: As criminal. Probably there is no better example of criminal activity against an oppressed people than the role the U.S. has been playing in the Congo, through her ties with Tshombe and the mercenaries. You can’t overlook the fact that Tshombe gets his money from the U.S. The money he uses to hire these mercenaries — these paid killers imported from South Africa — comes from the United States. The pilots that fly these planes have been trained by the U.S. The bombs themselves that are blowing apart the bodies of women and children come from the U.S. So I can only view the role of the United States in the Congo as a criminal role. And I think the seeds she is sowing in the Congo she will have to harvest. The chickens that she has turned loose over there have got to come home to roost.

QUESTION: What about the U.S. role in South Vietnam?

MALCOLM: The same thing. It shows the real ignorance of those who control the American power structure. If France, with all types of heavy arms, as deeply entrenched as she was in what then was called Indochina, couldn’t stay there, I don’t see how anybody in their right mind can think the U.S. can get in there — it’s impossible. ... Her complete defeat in South Vietnam is only a matter of time. ...

QUESTION: What is your opinion of the worldwide struggle now going on between capitalism and socialism?

MALCOLM: It is impossible for capitalism to survive, primarily because the system of capitalism needs some blood to suck. Capitalism used to be like an eagle, but now it’s more like a vulture. It used to be strong enough to go and suck anybody’s blood whether they were strong or not. But now it has become more cowardly, like the vulture, and it can only suck the blood of the helpless. As the nations of the world free themselves, then capitalism has less victims, less to suck, and it becomes weaker and weaker. It’s only a matter of time in my opinion before it will collapse completely.

February
BOOKS OF THE MONTH

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A working-class road to end cop brutality

The following statement was released Feb. 6 by Lisa Potash, Socialist Workers Party candidate for U.S. Senate from Georgia in 2022.

Working people across the country were outraged when they saw the video of cops in Memphis savagely stun with Tasers, punch, kick and beat with a baton Tyre Nichols Jan. 7, bragging to each other about it. He died three days later from injuries they inflicted.

This is a *class question*. The cops — and the entire criminal “justice” system — cannot be reformed or reorganized to serve our interests. They are an essential part of the capitalist rulers’ private property system of exploitation. Their spying, brutality, “plea bargain” system and their prisons are crucial to try and prevent working people from fighting to overturn the oppression we face.

They pay special attention to workers who are Black, who have shown — as in the mass proletarian movement that overthrew Jim Crow segregation — their capacity to fight and to lead broad social struggles. The goal of the propertied rulers is to intimidate, divide and weaken the working class as a whole.

Workers need to break from the parties of the

capitalist rulers, the Democrats and Republicans and others, and build our own political party, a labor party based on our unions. We need to chart a course to take political power into our own hands, to uproot the private property system and rebuild society to serve the interests of workers, farmers and all those who have suffered oppression at the hands of the capitalist exploiters.

When Cuban workers and farmers overthrew the U.S.-backed Fulgencio Batista dictatorship in 1959, they didn’t “reform” his police. They replaced them with proven revolutionary combatants dedicated to extending the hand of solidarity to toilers worldwide. This was only possible because our class had conquered state power.

As the charges against the cops who beat Nichols to death move to trial, working people need to pay careful attention. We must fight to assure that no blows are dealt to constitutional protections that we have fought for over decades — including the right to an impartial jury, to due process of law, against double jeopardy, to have to be proven guilty beyond doubt and more. Protecting these freedoms is central to the class struggle today.

Fight Jew-hatred! SWP speaks out in New Jersey

Continued from front page

The program featured government officials, including U.S. Sen. Robert Menendez; clergy, including Imam Kevin Dawud Amin of Masjid Al Wadud of Montclair and the Rev. Thomas Korkuch of Park United Methodists; and representatives from the Montclair NAACP, Asian American and Pacific Islander Montclair, Bloomfield Pride LGBTQ and New Jersey Alliance for Immigrants.

“There are a lot of other communities who are feeling as equally bereft, as equally angry, as equally in search of hope as the Jewish community is after these events, and after every antisemitic event,” Rabbi Marc Katz of Temple Ner Tamid told participants.

Menendez and other officials called for harsher anti-hate laws — which target people for what they think and say — and for increased funding for security at places of worship through programs organized by the Department of Homeland Security.

The FBI lost no time utilizing its arrest of Malindretos to try to boost its reputation. Agent James Dennehy told the *New York Times* the arrest shows “our determination and dedication to protecting houses of worship.”

Lea Sherman, Socialist Workers Party candidate for New Jersey General Assembly, delivered a solidarity message to the temple the day before, pledging the party’s support against antisemitic attacks, and attended the rally.

“Jew-hatred cannot be fought by joining Washington’s drive to refurbish the reputation of the FBI — its political police — or by strengthening hate crime laws that assault constitutional freedoms that workers need,” Sherman told the *Militant*. “Whoever the target is today, it is working people who will be targeted tomorrow.

“Antisemites scapegoat Jews for the inequalities caused by capitalism,” Sherman said. “Our unions must speak out, organize and act to defend Jews from every antisemitic assault.

“The SWP points to the only road to eradicating Jew-hatred once and for all — organizing to overturn the system that gives rise to it,” Sherman said, “and replacing capitalist rule with a workers and farmers government.”

Joanne Kuniansky is the SWP candidate for New Jersey State Senate.

Interview with Pussy Riot’s Masha Alyokhina

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tion against me and put me in solitary confinement.”

Women’s prisons mirror “Putin’s modern society,” she said. “They do everything they can to push women to forget that they have their own voice. They divide and rule, dividing prisoners into privileged and not privileged to keep order.

“It’s a very simple, old principle. People are losing their health, and a prisoner is thinking of the moment when he or she comes out and starts to live another life. It’s a Stalin principle.”

Alyokhina was released at the end of 2013. Pussy Riot visited Ukraine after the Maidan uprising ousted the pro-Moscow dictatorship of former President Viktor Yanukovich in 2014. That “was one of the most magical moments I have ever felt,” she said. Since then she has been to Kyiv several times.

In 2016 Pussy Riot members took part in a Kyiv rally demanding the release of two Ukrainian political prisoners, film director Oleg Sentsov and Oleksandr Kolchenko. The two had been arrested on fraudulent “terrorism” charges in Crimea in 2014 for opposing Moscow’s takeover. In 2017 Alyokhina and Olga Borisova were detained by police after they flew a “Free Sentsov” banner in Yakutsk, the Russian city where Sentsov was serving a 20-year sentence.

Today, band members have friends in Kyiv and other cities, including some “who are soldiers and fighting for Ukraine in Bakhmut,” Alyokhina said.

“It’s not just the question of the eastern part of Ukraine, it’s a question of Kazakhstan, it’s a question of the Baltic countries,” she said. “We should use everything we have to help Ukraine win this war,” she said. “But the first thing is understanding how things are.

“The war did not start in February 2022, it has been going on for 10 years minimum,” she said, pointing to the mounting repression meted out to Putin’s opponents, with people “beaten, imprisoned, killed. All of this was growing, and then the invasion. Only with Ukrainian blood did more people start to realize that something is wrong with Putin.”

Inside Russia, “a lot of people are already against the war,” but police actions have curtailed more widespread opposition.

“Twenty army enlistment offices and all their documents were burned by ordinary people who launched Molotov cocktail” attacks, after Putin’s Sept. 21 call-up, she said.

“And there are women relatives of soldiers who are trying to take their men back.” Alyokhina remains determined to speak out and to help mobilize opposition to the Kremlin’s war. “If each of us will do this minimum, it will be a big thing.”

Moscow tightens grip on occupied Crimea

BY SETH GALINSKY

Russian occupation forces have stepped up arrests in Crimea over the last several months, especially targeting Crimean Tatars for “crimes” such as singing songs in Ukrainian at their weddings. The assaults are fueling resistance to Moscow’s rule and the decadeslong struggle of Crimean Tatars for their national rights.

The Russian army seized the autonomous region of Crimea from Ukraine in February 2014, just days after the Ukrainian people overthrew the pro-Moscow regime of Viktor Yanukovich, following the Maidan uprising.

Moscow already had some 16,000 troops stationed in Crimea under a military treaty with Kyiv. Bolstered by at least 6,000 more, Moscow’s forces rapidly surrounded Ukrainian military bases with little resistance and arrested anyone who spoke out against their invasion, especially clamping down on Tatars.

Crimea has been the homeland of the mostly Muslim Tatar people for hundreds of years. Following the Bolshevik-led 1917 Russian Revolution, the Crimean Autonomous Soviet Socialist Republic was formed in 1921, ending the repression of Tatar culture and promoting its development. The new republic was welcomed as a voluntary part of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics under the leadership of V.I. Lenin.

But these conquests were overturned after Lenin’s death by the counterrevolutionary regime imposed by Joseph Stalin. In 1944 Stalin proclaimed the Tatar people were Nazi sympathizers and forcibly deported the entire Tatar population — 200,000 people — deep into the Soviet Union. Crammed into rail cars, deprived of sufficient food and water, and sent to live in harsh conditions, more than a quarter of the Tatars died during the forced journey and first years of exile. Moscow sent tens of thousands of Russians to Crimea to take over their homes, farms and jobs.

In 1954 Crimea was transferred from the Russian Soviet Federation to the Ukrainian Soviet Socialist Republic. It wasn’t until the death of Stalin that Tatars were permitted to return to their homeland. With the 1991 collapse of the Stalinist regime in the Soviet Union, the numbers returning grew.

By the time of the Maidan uprising, which was widely supported in Crimea, about 12% of the peninsula’s population was Tatar, 25% Ukrainian, and 58% Russian.

In March 2014 Moscow held a sham “referendum” under its military control that was boycotted by the Tatars and other Crimeans. It claimed people voted 97% for joining Russia.

To try to stabilize its rule, the Kremlin dissolved the Mejlis, the traditional governing body of the Tatar people, and banned many Tatar leaders from the country. When longtime Tatar leader Mustafa Dzhemilev tried to return, border police would not let him in, despite the thousands who came to greet him.

Thirty-three Crimean Tatars were arrested Jan. 25 after showing up at a court hearing in Simferopol where six other Tatars were facing frame-up charges.

In April last year, teacher Susanna Bezazieva was dismissed from her job for telling students that Ukrainians are defending their homes, freedom and independence.

In October, Olha Valyeva, “Miss Crimea,” was fined and jailed for singing the Ukrainian patriotic song “Red Kalyna” from a balcony.

“We will never give up our struggle,” Tatar leader Dzhemilev told a *Militant* reporting team in Kyiv in June 2015.



From May 18-20, 1944, Stalinist regime in the USSR deported 200,000 Tatars from Crimea, slandering them all as Nazis.